

Questions and Answers

Q.1 Is a Federal Supply Schedule required to be considered for this project?

A.1 No, it is not necessary for the offeror to have a Federal Supply Schedule contract to be considered for this procurement.

Q.2 Is it the USPTO's intent to include establishment and operation of its new and planned regional offices within the scope of support and services described in the RFI, and if so, will that support require local presence at the regional locations?

A.2 At this time, local presence at the regional USPTO offices is not required. However, the scope of IDEA-I is for support and services of the entire agency regardless of the locations of USPTO's new and planned regional offices.

Q.3 Would the government consider it to be a conflict of interest for a Contractor to be providing technical services support on both the SDI NG Contract vehicle, and the IDEAI-2 vehicle?

A.3 Yes, the USPTO would like to create a clear separation between these two contract vehicles. If you are a SDI-NG prime contractor you may not submit a proposal in response to the IDEAI-2 solicitation unless your SDI-NG contract is terminated prior to the due date of proposals. Although SDI-NG subcontractors are not precluded from bidding, as the potential for an OCI exists, any SDI-NG subcontractor that wishes to respond to the IDEAI-2 RFP should identify the actual or potential OCI as soon as possible prior to submitting a proposal. The Government will determine whether the OCI can be mitigated or whether the offeror will be precluded from submitting a proposal.

Q.4 What is/are current tool(s) being use for Agile development during the prototyping at USPTO/OCIO? (e.g. version one)

A.4 USPTO uses both waterfall and Agile methodologies in its system development lifecycle. USPTO currently has no specific tools for Agile development.

Q.5 Will USPTO be requiring to have CMMI-D vs. CMMI-S certification for contractor to be certified as part of the RFP requirements prior to the submission of the proposal or before the contract award?

A.5 USPTO has no requirement for CMMI certifications, but offerors are requested to list any certifications or awards pertaining to quality recognition or technical expertise.

Q.6 Currently, there is separate contract for Patent-End-To-End and have a multiple awardees, are they expecting the work under this contract be folded under IDEAI-2?

A.6 Patent End to End (PE2E) is a Program with multiple projects and is not a contract with multiple awardees. USPTO utilizes multiple contract vehicles to fulfill PE2E requirements, including the current IDEAI contracts. Certain PE2E requirements may be fulfilled using the new IDEAI-2 contract(s).

Q.7 Will a prime and/or subcontractor be prevented to bid IDEAI-2 if they are currently doing work under the SDI-NG contract (both large and small business category) or will they require to submit a COI plan?

A.7 Please see Questions and Answer 3 above.

Q.8 Currently, USPTO is short in office space, will the majority of the work under IDEAI-2 be performed on the contractor facilities? If so, will USPTO have enough budget to perform full C&A for contractor facilities?

A.8 Yes, the majority of the work by the contractors will be performed off-site. USPTO has a network connection service to off-site contractors. If the contractor follows the USPTO computer baseline, only a partial C&A will be needed and the USPTO sets aside funding for this effort.

Q.9 Is USPTO implementing the small business contracting goals under this contract and if yes what is the percentage?

A.9 The USPTO has not yet determined the small business subcontracting goals or strategy for this procurement. One of the purposes of this Request for Information is to conduct market research which will help the agency determine its small business subcontracting strategy. Please see the solicitation.

Q.10 How many active task orders been issued and total task orders (w/c include closed/non-active task orders) under the existing contract?

A.10 If you wish to know how many active task orders there are under the current IDEAI contract you may send a FOIA request for that information to the USPTO.

Q.11 The current IDEAI contract is \$95 million, will USPTO be reaching its ceiling prior to the issuance of the RFP and/or award of the IDEAI-2? if not how much is the current combined contract for all the incumbent contractors (GDIT, PPC and ManTech)

A.11 Based on current spending we do not anticipate reaching the ceiling amount of \$95 million. If you are asking for the allocation of obligated funds among all three contractors, this information is not necessary to respond to the RFI.

Q.12 How will task orders be issued and what is the anticipated typical response time for each?

A.12 Presently, Task Orders are competed among all vendors each year with a typical response period of 5 days for each task order.

Q.13 Has the government determined contract type, i.e., FFP, CPFF, CPAF, etc. or will this be determined at individual task order level?

A.13 The contract type will be a multiple award LH contract.

Q.14 How many awardees are anticipated?

A.14 We have not determined how many awardees there will be under the IDEAI-2 contract. Market research received from the RFI may aid in the USPTO's determination.

Q.15 Will the estimated total contract value remain at current levels?

A.15 No.

Q.16 The anticipated solicitation release date is tentatively scheduled for December 2012. Is our understanding correct?

A.16 The anticipated release for the IDEAI-2 solicitation is scheduled for the second quarter of the FY13.

Q.17 Will the government entertain holding a pre-solicitation, bidder's conference prior to release of the RFP?

A.17 At this time, the government is not planning to hold a pre-solicitation conference.

Q.18 Will each offeror supporting this contract be conflicted out of implementation and deployment?

A.18 Please see Questions and Answer 3 above.

Q.19 Is the USPTO only looking for contractors that can provide all of the services described in the draft SOW?

A.19 Yes, the USPTO is only looking for offerors to provide a total solution.

Q.20 Will the USPTO consider using vendors that specialize only in certain services described in the draft SOW, such as systems design?

A.20 See A. 19. In addition, the USPTO expects that teaming, partnering, or subcontracting solutions will also be accepted.

Q.21 Do all applications developed and currently supported follow same standards across the board with USPTO's new Software Development Life Cycle (SDLC)?

A.21 The USPTO uses the same System Development Life Cycle (SDLC) process to develop and deliver its technology solutions including application software systems and infrastructure elements. The current SDLC 4.0 went active in April 2011 to support both Agile and waterfall methodologies.

Q.22 Will there be a valid database record available to identify all internal and external users? If yes, what will be the database of record utilized?

A.22 USPTO uses Active Directory to provide accounts to authorized users.

Q.23 What is the estimated combined number of internal and external users that will be supported?

A.23 Approximately 13,000 internal authorized users with Active Directory accounts. External user, by definition, is the general public and therefore undetermined.

Q.24 Will the contractor be responsible for assisting with configuration of non-Government Furnished Equipment (GFE) WiFi and Network for users' remote home location?

A.24 Yes.

Q.25 Is USPTO currently practicing virtualization methods such as application and desktop virtualization for their users? If not, is the expectation these emerging technologies will be serviced by the new contractor?

A.25 Yes, USPTO currently practices virtualization methods for a portion of our users.

Q. 26 Are contractor staff expected to be onsite at all times 24/7 to provide operation and maintenance support? Is there a cut-off time when on-call engineering support will begin?

A.26 For the USPTO, the current IDEAI contractors are on call 24x7 but are not required to be onsite 24/7.

Q. 27 Is there any expectation for the contractor to perform continual ongoing back-ups of servers, back-ups of data to tapes, and shipping of tapes to a remote storage location? If yes, how often will this work be performed?

A.27 USPTO does not do server backups. A backup of network equipment is done every 24 hours via an automated system.

Q. 28 Who is the main incumbent contractor providing network engineering and infrastructure design support currently?

A.28 General Dynamics, Project Performance Corporation, and ManTech Int'l Corporation.

Q. 29 What tools is USPTO currently using to follow ITIL best practices such as Change Management, Release Management, and Problem Management processes?

A.29 The product used by USPTO is Remedy.

Q. 30 Is there currently a board group that exists within USPTO to discuss Change Requests, Problem Records, and Upcoming Releases? If yes, will the contractor be made part of the board and have a "seat at the table"?

A.30 Yes, there are weekly Change Request (CR) meetings and Release meetings (a.k.a. Project Status Review). Yes, you will be required to attend these meetings if you have an open CR or have a release scheduled. Problem records are handled via email and Root Cause Analysis Reports for each problem.

Q. 31 Is there currently a Knowledge Base database available used by contractors for engineering and infrastructure support? If yes, what tool is being used for the Knowledge Base Database?

A.31 Remedy Knowledge Base is comprised of Remedy Knowledge Management and Right Answers Knowledge (for COTS applications).

Q.32 If awarded, will our participation in the discussions around IDEAI preclude us from bidding on any resulting hardware/software/services requirements?

A.32 At this time, the only known OCI IDEAI-2 has is with SDI-NG. If you are participating in one you may not participate in another. However, other organizational conflicts of interest may arise as a result of performance under IDEAI-2. Avoidance, mitigation or neutralizing future OCOIs will be conducted on a case-by-case basis.

Q.33 Will this be a full-time activity or as needed through 2018?

A.33 The USPTO are not sure what is being asked. IDEAI-2 is contemplated as a multiple award contract vehicle with a base period of one year and four one-year option periods for each contract awarded. As the majority of task orders will be competed, we cannot predict the amount of work each contractor will perform.

Q.34 Can we bid on portions of this RFI/RFQ or will we need to be able to provide support for all areas listed?

A.34 See A.19 above.

Q.35 Can you provide a definition for the following areas:

- System Planning,

- **Secure System Design,**
 - **This one is questionable based on the definition here. IS this overall security or a application security standard?**
- **Infrastructure Engineering,**
- **Network Engineering,**
- **System Engineering,**
- **Accessibility Engineering,**
- **Enterprise Architecture,**
- **Data Architecture,**
- **Application Architecture,**
- **Security Architecture,**
- **Security Engineering, and**
- **System Development Life Cycle Support, design of infrastructure system components, and may serve as an unbiased third party in the review of other Government contractors' plans, performance, and products.**

A.35 For purposes of this RFI, USPTO uses commonly accepted IT definitions of the terms set forth above.

Q.36 On page 2 of the RFI, the submission instructions state to submit RFI responses electronically to the email address below (erin.fox-ramirez@uspto.gov), but on page 4 it states to send the RFI responses to ideai2@uspto.gov . Which address do we submit the RFI response to?

A.36 Please submit all response to the ideai2@uspto.gov mailbox. The other email address is there as an alternate if you cannot get through or experience technical difficulties.